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RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
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RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 2917
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEOMFD/MACDILL AFB FL HQ USCENTCOM
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 5666
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RUERJFA/COMMCEN FT GEORGE G MEADE
RUEAAIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 001045

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DEPT FOR SCA/A, EUR/RPM
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TAGS: PREL MARR AF
SUBJECT: NATO-AFGHAN COOPERATION PROGRAM - GOA AND NATO
AMBASSADORS DISCUSS DRAFT TEXTS

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Classified By: AMBASSADOR RONALD NEUMANN, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶11. (C) Summary: Minister of Defense Wardak and National Security Advisor called a meeting of NATO Ambassadors on March 9 to discuss draft language for the Afghan Cooperation Program negotiations, to take place in Brussels on March 13-15. The Afghan side has added a substantial amount of new language to the NATO draft in order to increase the importance of the agreement, and has proposed the new title, &NATO-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Program.8 The new draft also includes points on interoperability (although it does not specify military equipment we suspect that is a purpose), NATO actions in support of reconstruction and development, and more detailed language regarding cooperation with the Afghan National Security Forces (army and police). We have cautioned that some areas like development and counter narcotics may not be within NATO's purview. (We will send scanned copies of the two drafts to USNATO and SCA/A via classified email.) End summary.

¶12. (C) NSA Rassoul emphasized that the primary purpose of the agreement is to reinforce the Afghan-NATO relationship on the strategic level. He said that it was intended to reinforce Afghanistan's long-term link to NATO. Minister Wardak added that Afghanistan is already working closely with NATO and is seeking to build an enduring relationship. Wardak said that the common interests and threats shared by both Afghanistan and NATO justify the request for a strategic partnership. He mentioned

three specific benefits they hope to get out of the agreement. 1) It would reassure those who look at the period of the 1990s when Afghanistan was abandoned by most of the international community; 2) In future Afghanistan would like to contribute to NATO peacekeeping efforts and the proposals in the agreement would help Afghanistan develop this capability; and 3) A strategic partnership with NATO, together with the strategic partnership already signed with the United States, would show neighboring countries that the international community is committed to Afghanistan for the long term, and would thereby have a strong deterrence effect.

¶13. (C) NATO SCR Minister Cetin noted that while some NATO member nations would be willing to accept the concept of a strategic partnership with Afghanistan others might not. When Minister Wardak said that Afghanistan wanted an agreement that would be &more8 than the Partnership for Peace, Cetin responded that the NATO draft already went beyond the PfP, but that Afghanistan should remember that NATO has special relationships with PfP countries as well.

¶14. (C) The Canadian Ambassador requested clarification about the binding nature of the document. It was agreed that it should be political, not legally, binding, since NATO does not have authority to conclude treaties and member nations would have to obtain ratification from their national legislatures.

¶15. (C) Ambassador Neumann, noting that he had not had an opportunity to receive instructions from Washington, remarked that during the process of

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discussing ISAF Phase III expansion it had become clear that some NATO countries make a clear division between civilian and military tasks and do not see a developmental role for NATO. Thus inclusion of NATO responsibilities for alternative livelihood and economic development might be problematic. Minister Wardak asked about the development work undertaken by PRTs, and the Ambassador replied that the subject had received a great deal of discussion at the NAC. He said that the language regarding PRTs in the OPLAN had been agreed by all parties, and might be a good starting point for the Afghan-NATO discussion on this subject.

¶16. (C) The German Ambassador questioned the lack of differentiation between army and police in the Afghan draft, noting that it refers primarily to ANSF. He expressed the view of his government that NATO is not the right partner for policing, and that military and police issues need to be separated in the document. Minister Wardak acknowledged the point and said they would make some changes to their draft.

Comment

¶18. (C) These drafts are the starting point for negotiations, and the Afghans will probably accept changes to their proposals. What was clear from the today's discussion was that the Afghan side does not understand the decision-making process at NATO, nor the relationship between NATO and its member states. Rather, the Afghans see NATO as a single unit with which they can easily come to agreement, and which can take on a variety of tasks) such as reconstruction projects) without reference to the national policies of member states. However, while

both sides agreed that it is unlikely the three days, discussion will result in a document ready for signature, the meeting should pave the way for eventual agreement to a document with value for both sides.

NEUMANN